DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 168 430 HE 011 135

AUTHOR Fooden, Myra
TITLE The Student Planned Curriculum in Human Development.
PUB DATE Aug 78
NOTE 32p.; Paper presented at the American Psychological Association Meeting (Toronto, Canada, August 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Students; *College Curriculum; Higher Education; *Human Development; Nontraditional Students; *Psychology; Research Projects; *Student Centered Curriculum; *Student Interests
IDENTIFIERS *Empire State College NY

ABSTRACT

The kinds of content areas that mature students in psychological studies and human development select to pursue, given almost limitless free choice, were investigated at Empire State College, New York. One hundred and two programs of study were reviewed during a two-year period. Results indicated that adult students selected traditional course equivalents 50 percent of the time, but that the frequency of these selections was at wide variance with the frequency of offerings across liberal arts colleges. Adult students did not demonstrate interest in natural science orientations in psychology, but did demonstrate a strong interest in applied areas and exceptionally strong interest in social science areas. In addition to traditional social science oriented course titles, psychology and contemporary social problems, humanistic concerns, and topical areas related to personal and social concerns were most selected. Human development students, as opposed to psychology students, revealed a more interdisciplinary choice of subjects within the concentration. A literature review on curricular developments and trends is included. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED168430

The Student Planned Curriculum in Human Development

by

Myra Fooden
Empire State College

A paper presented at the American Psychological Association Meeting
Toronto
August 1978

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Myra Fooden

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND THE ERIC SYSTEM CONTRACTORS."

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

AE011 135

The Student Planned Curriculum in Human Development

The impact of activism on college campuses during the 1960's brought into focus questions about processes in every facet in the University structure. Adoption of new modes were seen by some as an answer, if not the answer, to the problems of the Universities. These changes had evolved from the development of new instructional modes; from humanistic approaches to education as a philosophy; from forced consideration of the relationship of the academic society to the wider public; from social concern and social opportunity as a process, especially relating to extending the opportunity for higher education to more populations; and from the human potential movement. All of these impacted on educational objectives and their consequential implementation. (Hall, 1974; Hefferlin, 1969).

A variety of reforms were introduced into colleges and universities (Hall, 1974, Heiss, 1973, Gould and Cross, 1972). While reform was evident in many areas of college and university structure, one that has received a great deal of attention was curriculum reform.

Question had been raised about the relevance of traditional curriculum to students' goals, the issue of students as consumers exercising their rights, to the problem of a sound or appropriate curriculum for liberal education in general and for within the disciplines. Criticisms suggested that the colleges and universities had failed on all of these counts.

One attempt to contradict these criticisms was the introduction of the student oriented curriculum. Zyskind and Sternfeld (1971) suggest that the student oriented curriculum, as a reform movement, was initiated to be responsive to students' interests, to assist students to deal with the problems of their lives and times and to eliminate competition between faculty. They further state that many faculty, antagonistic to this reform, did, and still do, believe that student oriented curricula deny rules of reason, subvert the processes of communication and disallow the structure of a subject matter to develop in an orderly and necessary

fashion. In other words, some faculty felt that their time-honored paternal rights of deciding what was best for students and in what way it should be delivered were being usurped.

Student oriented curricula were accused of disparaging talk, of encouraging the testing of truths by subjective reaction rather than by scholarly inquiry and of fostering teacher-student relationships that were built on personal interactions rather than by accepted formal teacher-learner modes.

Arguments against these criticisms employed humanistic and invididual human potential frames of reference. What excites or interests one student, it was argued, does not interest another. If the aim of liberal education is to develop the abilities of analysis, synthesis and critical judgment, these may best be developed within a focus of students' interests. The student oriented curriculum found home in a select group of institutions and in some specialized programs within others.

As the student oriented curricula became modus operendi in some institutions, the degree of student participation in the curriculum planning process, as well as the degree of individualization became two salient dimensions to examine. Knudson, (1974) outlined the many models of student oriented curricula that had been initiated, in analogy to food distribution processes:

1. The pre-packaged menu - this is a fully faculty directed model with perhaps a few options.
2. The consumer preference model - this is still faculty directed but has advisement from consumers (i.e., a student member of the curriculum committee).
3. The cafeteria model or a la carte menu - this model provides a large selection, although it is faculty prepared. An individual may make a number of choices to create a full package. While it is not individually assembled it is individually assembled. This has individualization but little student participation.

4. The cooking class - this is exemplified by the cluster college programs in which groups of students plan a curriculum in cooperation with a selected faculty member. Its participatory aspect is group decision-making, and recognition of peer relationships realized in some parts actually being peer taught with faculty advisement. This has student participation but less individualization.
5. The do-it-yourself model - this model supplies many of the ingredients, but parts may also be individually planned. These individually designed choices may also encompass a variety of learning modes. This is moving towards autonomy and individualization.
6. The no-mix-prepare from scratch - this model allows students to design the totality of their curricula. There is not specific pool to draw from, but a variety of options and learning modes are open to students. Faculty members play the role of counselor, advisor and facilitator more than teacher.

Programs incorporating more student choice and more individually designed curricula have been termed innovative, experimental, special and non-traditional. Colleges and Universities which lean toward more faculty directed models are considered more traditional.

Departments or programs which lean towards more student choice and individualization appear to embody certain characteristics, which may be subsumed under a philosophy of student centered education. As Heiss stated "...assumes that the student, is at least in part, responsible for his own intellectual and personal growth and for framing the design of his own education." (1973, p. 60). A student centered education emphasizes self-appropriated learning. The faculty member abstains from the role of expert, of repository of knowledge and of ultimate sage. Rather the faculty member is a mentor, a guide, an advisor. An important aspect of student centered learning is a concern for the growth and development of the person, and,

not only allowing for, but fostering the development of making personal choices.

The implementation of a particular model may evolve from many factors. The mission of the college, the attitudes of the faculty, the size of the institution and the population it serves, are only a few.

While most critical reviews and descriptions have looked at non-traditional models in relation to general education, some programs in psychology which embody these ideas were described (Kulik, 1973). Kulik's et. al. review of undergraduate education in Psychology described the then extant range of programs in a variety of institutions. The program at Sonoma State College, based on faculty commitment to student-relevant education, was an example of a student centered approach, dominated by humanistic concerns and built closely to the do-it-yourself plan previously described. There were no specific requirements, but the student creates a curriculum by selecting eight courses in psychology from the catalog, in consultation with a faculty advisor. The teaching methods were geared to the student as central in the process, with little use of lecture method. Small classes, discussion groups, field experience, laboratories for free experimentation, highly individualized library or life research projects all constituted the content of the 'courses'. In addition, there was strong focus on self-discovery, awareness of personal values and self-evaluation which contributed to its student centeredness in implementation, combining much choice with individualized focus.

Another example of an attempt at student centered education in psychology, described by Kulik, was that of Trinity College. The mission of the College, and the favorable, even enthusiastic, attitude of the administration appeared to be the motivating force in implementing a non-traditional model. The psychology department, responsive to the concept of student choice, reframed the program. Only a minimum of predesigned courses were offered, with the majority to be developed on an ongoing basis through joint discussion between faculty and students, around the areas of faculty competence.

This was a kind of cooking class approach with a good dose of individualization in the use of independent study, field experiences, apprenticeships, and student run courses, all consonant with a non-traditional approach.

The initial involvement of the students was low at the start of the program, but it was hoped that more student participation would evolve. The program has not fulfilled its promise to remain non-traditional in the dimensions of student participation and individualization, although certainly more individualization occurs than was evident historically in this college. Why the program has not maintained, in spite of favorable evaluation after two years, may be attributed to changes in administration outlook, suspicion by faculty in other disciplines and faculty reaction to that, changes in original faculty who did not evolve with the philosophy of non-traditional education, unreadiness of students to accept the responsibilities attendant, and changes in student-faculty ratios. (Note A)

More open programs in psychology, where students had some options in the planning, appeared to be loaded with studies in personal development, social science orientations, applied areas, topical areas, studies in specific theorists, and studies with deep humanistic concerns. This appears to be at the expense of studies in quantitative measurement, natural science orientation and experimental design. These latter areas have been considered essential in the preparation of students for graduate work in Psychology.

The Sonoma students, after graduation plans, included such fields as education and a myriad of roles in the helping professions. While about one third of Trinity graduates were reported to apply to graduate psychology programs (current estimates run about 15-20%), mainly in Clinical Psychology, many undergraduate majors were anticipating careers in medicine, law and business. Since most psychology majors were not becoming professional psychologists, the programs appeared compatible with the aims of a liberal arts education.

The type of students may be a salient factor in determining the appropriate use of non-traditional models of education. Recognition that an open, innovative, student-centered program presupposes student maturity, an intellectual alertness and curiosity, and the ability to work and think independently suggests that it may not be viable for all student bodies. Further, as Gould (1973) states, "Students nurtured in the traditional forms of education at elementary and secondary levels may have great difficulty when confronted with non-traditional options that give him more flexibility, more independence and more responsibility for self-motivation." (p. 3)

Another variable which may affect the choice of educational approach is the size of the institution or department. A large institution or department is less able to tolerate individualization. In these situations alternatives for including student choice, other than the small group discussion mode, may need to be examined.

Another factor which impacts considerably on the tolerance for student choice and individualization is the attitude of the faculty and the orientation of the department. The development of curriculum has a long history of being the responsibility of the faculty within a discipline. Some faculty may find it difficult to reliquish their historical prerogatives. And, finally, what of the demands of the discipline?

A discipline is composed of a methodology, a body of facts and evaluation techniques (Dressel, 1971). If one takes the view that the purpose of undergraduate education is indoctrination into a discipline, then curriculum development is clearly defined for psychology. Or is it? The schism in the discipline of psychology is the view of psychology as a natural science with its disciplinary demands, and of psychology as a social science with its own demands. Do you teach the descriptive or explanatory (scientific) approach or the policy or control (social science) approach? Should the emphasis be on theory development and data collection or on problem solving? Perhaps the optimum curriculum provides a sound foundation

in both of these orientations. But is that kind of diversity able to be developed at the undergraduate level, and is that what students are really seeking?

Kulik (1973) states: "If Psychology has a bible, it is the statistical textbook, but many students shy away from psychology's scriptures, preferring Freudian to Cartesian projections, moral values to eigenvalues, human frontiers to statistical limits. Thus, the problem in psychology and the problems in the education of psychology are not the same." (p. 39)

Pursuing either or both of the orientations suggest that students are interested in acquiring a foundation for graduate work in the field. Kulik's data suggest that only 25 - 35% of psychology majors plan graduate work in psychology. Others plan graduate work in other fields, in professional schools and by far the largest group are those who will seek employment after graduation. Is a curriculum which indoctrinates into the discipline the appropriate one for most students? Or should it be rather directed towards developing understanding of themselves and others as thinking, feeling and behaving organisms, especially for those aspiring to careers in education or roles in the helping professions. Or what about the development of awareness of attitudes towards humanistic concerns for those projecting a career with societal institutions. This does not even consider the technical-vocational skills which were previously evaluated and discarded as incompatible with a liberal arts view.

Tracking and special course sequences had been considered irrelevant (Wolfle et. al., 1952; Mckeachie and Milholland, 1961; Kulik, 1973). Tracking, further, would tend to elicit criticisms of inequality in education, an accusation which the colleges and universities would be anxious to avoid.

The dilemma of creating a curriculum for undergraduate psychology has been considered several times (the Wolfle report, 1952; the Michigan report, 1961; Kulik, Brown, Vestewig and Wright, 1973). This latest report (Kulik, 1973)

demonstrated that a variety of undergraduate curriculum related to content, orientation, approaches and expectations were operative. What was not systematically examined was how and whether the programs related to specific student variables, except in a few instances noted above.

One student variable that has been overlooked is that of "age and experience." In 1973, Kulik predicted that we may see the expansion of the population base for higher education to encompass older persons, and as early as 1961, the Michican group suggested that practical coursework was appropriate in Adult Education where the students are usually already employed, are likely to be mature and have the ability to profit from courses in scientific psychology, making their own applications as needed.

Actually, the return to undergraduate education for mature students had already become a visible movement. Career seekers and returnees to the career world, most of these women, as well as movers on the career ladder and career changers, men and women, had begun to seek entry to undergraduate education. Many of these students were also completers of interrupted educational experiences. Many colleges and universities responsive to this movement in the late 1960's initiated special programs, altered traditional modes of time and attendance expectations (i. e. weekend college), evaluative criteria (i. e. credit for life experience), modes of instruction (i. e. off campus independent study) and in general incorporated many of the new, non-traditional reforms. The motives were, of course, not entirely altruistic. It was recognized that this was a potential source of new student population, especially for those institutions beginning to feel the effects of reduced college age admission seekers. The non-traditional reforms were found to include modes that were more appropriate to students who additional roles included employee, parent, spouse and often adult child to a geriatric parent.

One institution that focuses strongly on this adult population and incorporates a variety of non-traditional approaches to education is Empire State College, State

University of New York. Originally conceived as an alternative for the disenchanted student on the traditional campuses of SUNY, Empire State from its inception in 1971 drew a population of older students, average age 36-38 years. Most students have been upper division, having earned prior college credit in associate degrees from the community colleges or in earlier interrupted college experiences, in professional-vocational training programs, in college-level testing equivalencies, and by learning from life experience, which must be articulated, documented and evaluated. The average students begin their ESC College career with about sixty credits, although there are beginners as well.

The primary mode of instruction is independent study under the guidance of a faculty member or special tutor. Students also enroll in traditional courses in other units of the State University, take approved workshops or training programs, do field experiences and participate in small group seminars led by faculty members. The content of this study is specified in a document called a learning contract.

Mentors work with students helping them design individually focused degree programs incorporating learning contracts according to student choice. The system purports to adhere closely to the no-mix start-from-scratch model in Knudson's descriptions. Since the program is usually designed early in the students' career, it provides the student with a projected plan to follow, although it can be changed, modified and altered as the students' interest or focus shift. One mentor is responsible for overseeing and advising the student on the degree program, although the student works with many faculty members and tutors in different content areas.

The college is structured so that there are no departments based on traditional academic disciplines. Rather the studies are grouped into nine broad areas which are more like "schools within a university" than departments (i. e. educational studies, business studies, human development, etc.). Up to now, the title of an

individual students' degree program might have carried the broad area of study name, or might have been more specifically identified by a discipline name (i. e. psychology) or by the students' goal (i. e. counseling),(Fooden, 1978).

The focus of this study was to determine what selections of study in human development students make given the opportunity to design their own degree program (free choice). This will be contrasted with curricula which are extant in settings where faculty and departments create the pool from which studies may be drawn given less traditional approaches, or prescribe the curriculum in more traditional approaches. This will be related to student goals.

Method

An examination was made of all degree programs completed and processed by the Office of Academic Affairs between June 1976 and May 1978, which had a concentration title of Psychology, Psychological plus anything else, Counseling, Human plus some other word, Human Behavior, Therapy, Human Services and Human and/or Community Services. There were a total of 179 individual programs. Examination of these degree programs suggested five distinct categories.

Group I - The Psychology Group	48
Group II - The Human Development Group	32
Group III - The Alternative Title Group	23
Group IV - The Human Services Group	40
Group V - The Human/Community Service Group	36
	179

Each group had subcategories with varying titles.

Since the studies in Human Services and Human and Community Services clearly suggest an alternative approach and methodology, and possibly student goals, these latter two groups were not considered in this analysis. Groups I, II and III were considered the categories most related to liberal arts studies in Human Development

and Psychology. 102 Degree Programs were examined by Group for post graduation objective and content of programs.

Results

The first question sought to be answered was: given the unique mature student population, what were their objectives after graduation.

Table I defines the plans of ESC Graduates.

TABLE I insert here

About 25% of students concentrating in Psychology (Group I) hope to go on to graduate school in Psychology, while 31.25% expect to work or continue full time employment within their present or alternative occupational field. Another 12.5% expect to seek entrance to an MSW program. Almost 21% plan on graduate work in the future but are non-specific or undecided what they wish to study. Slightly over 10% have alternative graduate goals.

For Group II the picture changes. Almost half have no graduate plans at all, and nearly 1/3 have vague, future, non-specific plans. Less than 10% hope for graduate work in Psychology; another less than 10% the MSW, and 6% have selected other graduate programs. In Group III, none stated graduate work in Psychology as an objective. Under 10% selected the MSW and almost 22% state they are undecided or non-specific about future graduate work. Almost 50% are planning to initiate or continue full-time employment.

The next question was: given these self-determined objectives, how do students develop a relevant program of study; what is it they select to know, acquire, understand, develop, organize and research.

An examination of the 102 degree programs included in this study revealed that students had completed a total of 511 learning contracts (250 in Group I, 144 in Group II, 117 in Group III) or an average of five contracts per degree program.

This does not indicate the number of credits earned. One contract month is equal to four credits but contracts may be written for one, two, three or more months, depending upon the scope and depth of the study. Massed and grouped studies may extend longer, although there appears to be a trend towards labeling units of study with more specificity and defining units of credit more equivalent to course credit in a traditional institution. The number of credits earned in each "subject" of study has not been included nor has weighting been assigned. The report here is simply on frequency of occurrence. Most contracts that have course equivalencies were studied for 3-8 credits; some with applied aspects or field training included earned 12-16 credits and practical experience tended to run higher than course equivalents. Special Projects and massed studies earned as much as 24-30 credits.

Table II contrasts the frequency of thirty course offerings in State Colleges in 1969 with the frequency of selection of these courses in Empire State College across the three groups.

TABLE II and III insert here

Of the total of 511 contracts completed, somewhat more than half were equivalent to courses offered in traditional institutions, in faculty designed degree programs. However, it can readily be seen that the frequency of offerings in state colleges are not compatible with what mature students in a non-traditional program in a state college may be seeking.

Table III demonstrates the frequency of categories within which the selections of ESC students fall.

TABLE III insert here

Table IV contrast the percentages of courses grouped as above offered at four-year schools with (equivalent to Group I) and without the Psychology major (equivalent to Groups II and III) in 1969 and the percentage of contracts completed in these areas.

TABLE IV insert here

Discussion

The after graduation plans of ESC mature students who define themselves as Psychology Majors seems to be fairly compatible with younger students in other colleges. The Group II (Human Development) are clearly more like non-majors as is Group III (the Alternative Title Group). There appears to be some consistency across students as to how they view their objectives and how their educational plans can meet those.

Table I indicates that over 50% of all contracts (280) completed carry the title of usually offered courses.

There are some interesting results to examine. While all state colleges (100%) offer the General and/or Introductory Psychology course (both for majors and non-majors) only 1.9 of all contracts completed were in Introductory or General Psychology. Several explanations are possible; first, most students are upper division and enter with previous college credit, which may include the survey course. Second, is that mature students come in with notions about what Psychology is. True, these notions are often biased to think of Psychology as Psychopathology and Psychotherapy, but there are a fair number of adult students who have consistently read publications which disseminate results of psychological research to the lay public. Thus, a survey course may be irrelevant. Students come in with real questions and want specific studies related to these questions. Third, there is a consistent attitude amongst the faculty to preserve the freedom that the student select the area of contract study and that any imposition of a requirement denies that freedom to formulate a prescribed curriculum.

Kulik's survey indicated that the introductory courses, traditionally taught as a survey, is maintaining its tenacity in traditionally oriented schools; however, there was some evidence which suggests that innovations are being

introduced. While most of these innovations are in teaching methodology, a few related to content. One was to focus on current issues, on topical areas and on interdisciplinary study and self-development. Innovative approaches were the use of popular and fictional works, field experiences and independent study. What is innovative in one setting is commonplace and basic in another.

As the statistics and research (Table II) are examined some factors may be noted. In four-year schools with the major 10.65% of the curriculum is in methodology and almost an equal amount of the total of ESC contracts in Group I (10.4%) were in this area. Similarly, in four-year schools without the major (5.15%) of the curriculum is in methodology and our Group II students completed 5.54% of the contracts in this area.

There is a dearth of interest in methodology in the Group III students, who begin to show an orientation quite diverse from Psychology per se; and into an interdisciplinary education. It is probable that the Psychology concentration students who did "elect" to study statistics and methodology did so, not because they had a burning desire to do so, but because they were advised by their mentor that it would be expedient if they hoped to be a candidate for a graduate program. This is one criterion used to assist students in self-selection of their real educational and career goals.

This usually separates the seriously intentioned student whose educational and career goals are well formulated towards graduate study in professional psychology. For other students, proceeding to realistically assess their goals and to provide them with appropriate career/life/educational planning is the next step. Mature students want to make their plans and then get on with the business of learning.

In the Wolfle conference report (1952), which emphasized the importance of a statistics course, it was stated that: "the course on statistical reasoning is not intended to train undergraduates to become computers. It is developed on

the assumption that quantitative thinking is essential to an adequate grasp of modern psychological thought." * In spite of the anti-quantification movement, it is recognized that basic understanding of quantitative thinking is essential in a liberal arts education and spans disciplines.

Mature students who are serious about their educational and career options will opt to fulfill this criteria for possible entry into Graduate Schools. While there appeared to be a lack of methodology or more specifically an experimental course, it is also true that Psychology concentration students do a complete research project or a replication of a research as part of a contract with another title. This is consistent with the Wolfle conferences recommendation that methodology "empty of content is difficult, dry stuff...and not productive of much transfer." (p. 27) This alternative, of course, emphasizes the value of individualized education. For even with a student load of thirty or more, the mentor who is intimately tied in to what the student is doing, can guide the student through a research project, since only a small number of any one time will actually be working on independent research. Because ESC is not a research oriented school and adult students and mentors lead separate urban or suburban multiple role existences, research assisting in experimental paradigms is not feasible unless a placement can be found elsewhere.

The widest disparity in the comparisons begins to emerge in the difference in emphasis between the natural science processes and the social science view. The emphasis in natural sciences in schools with the Major is nearly 20% of the curriculum and 5% in schools without the major. Psychology majors at ESC do not even equal the non-major schools' emphasis in contracts completed (2.4%). ESC Groups II and III ignore this facet of Psychology entirely. It appears that such studies may be viewed negatively, as being more difficult or less interesting.

---

*also quoted in Kulik, 1973, p. 40

The large number of women students may adversely affect the choices in natural science areas. It may also result from subtle effect of mentor interest, but most probably rests in students' view of Psychology as a way of dealing with psycho-social issues.

The trend in traditional schools is toward a heavy emphasis on social science processes and this trend is continued and emphasized amongst ESC students. In looking at Group I students, the emphasis in contracts completed is almost equal to curriculum emphasis (31.62 in four-year schools w/majors; 29.0 ESC contracts, Group I) and the same courses favored; personality, developmental and child and abnormal, but is more heavily emphasized by selections in psychology and current social problems. The heavier loading into social science areas is related to the choices in seminar type studies relating to specific topical areas and issues. For Group II and III, there is somewhat less interest in the traditionally named studies than the emphasis in the four-year school without the major, but this is compensated for and further developed by the selections in the problems and topical areas.

Also while Psychology majors restrict their concentration in psychologically oriented courses, Human Development (Group II) and alternative title (Group III) students take a broadened view of their approach to study including other disciplines (14.6% and 31.6%) as integral.

In the applied areas Group I students have more emphasis than in schools with the major (20% vs. 15%) and somewhat less in Groups II and III than in four-year schools without the major (29.87% vs. 25.7% and 24.4%). It is within the individual course selections that differences are noted. For example, Kulik reports that only 1.60% in four-year schools with the major and 6% in four-year schools without the major are devoted to counseling. For ESC Group I students, counseling was 7.2% of contracts completed, 9.6% of Group II contracts and 16.2% of Group III contracts. Skills in Kulik's survey was .14% of four-year

with the major and not appearing in schools without, for ESC contracts it was 6% for Group I, 11.8% Group II and 4.3% for Group III. There was a corresponding decrease in the areas Kulik found more prevalent in traditional schools; tests and measurements are not popular with Empire State students in Human Development. (It is popular with Educational Studies students). Educational Psychology and Industrial which Kulik had found decreasing in emphasis have even less relevance for Empire State students in Human Development concentrations, but are studied by students in educational studies and business studies.

The most significant difference in the curriculum at traditional schools and the curriculum at Empire State involves studies which are:

a) Skills and interpersonally oriented, designed for majors not seeking the graduate degree.

b) Relating psychology to current social issues.

c) Topical areas which fall under a course number called seminar but without specific content.

Kulik's findings that a relatively small percentage of course offerings in these three areas were extant in four-year schools with and without the majors. Fewer than 5% of chairpersons in four-year schools with the major mentioned special content emphasis as distinctive features of their programs, including interdisciplinary, contemporary social issues and humanistic concepts; another 2.6% only mentioned special topics.

While Empire students did not specifically select occupationally oriented courses, the applied areas which are career relevant are selected. Counseling fills that need, since most of our adult students are filling roles where this knowledge and skills are important. If they are already not doing so, it is an immediate objective to work in a social service or human relations capacity. Another finding previously mentioned is the heavy emphasis on psychology and current social issues. Adult students, like younger ones, feel the desire to

more deeply understand and deal with their lives and times. They can read on their own and they are strongly motivated to do so. Why then do they seek this understanding through an educational environment? They are skeptical of their own abilities to select appropriate materials, to analyze and synthesize the various views, to formulate viewpoints without a counterpart to discuss with. The mentor fills the role of peer and teacher. They need the encouragement and rely on the evaluation of the faculty that they are able to "still think." They want the academic standard to measure themselves against.

Finally, the exceptionally heavy choice in the seminar topical areas demonstrates that students can develop their own individual choices in what they wish to study, given the opportunity to do so. The opportunity to study in a topical area, represents to the adult student, an opportunity to fulfill a specific quest for learning within an academically sanctioned environment.

Fifty-eight contracts amongst Group I students were in topical areas that might be offered in seminar and are almost always reserved for advanced students. These contracts were distributed over several categories.

1. In depth studies of specific theorists or theories (i.e. Freud, Maslow, Post-Freudians, Mind-Body Theorists, etc.) N = 13
2. A specific theorists or theoretical view on a subject area in psychology (i.e. Erikson and Child Development, Freud and Sex-role Development, Transference-Freud and Jung). N = 5
3. Topical areas in Psychology, (i.e. Death and Dying, Human Sexuality, Adult Development, Theories of Love, Theories of Agression, Mental Retardation, Sex-roles and the Family). N = 24
4. Current interest areas, and areas on The Edges of Traditional Psychology (i.e. Psychology and Eastern Thought, Existential Psychoanalysis, Holistic Psychology, Feeling and Non-Verbal Experience). N = 16

Of the thirty-two contracts Group II completed, most were quite similar to the specialized areas completed by Group I and were distributed as follows:

1. Specific theorists. N = 4
2. Specific theorist or Theoretical view of a topical area. N = 2
3. Topical areas in Psychology. N = 19
4. Current interests, and the edges of Psychology. N = 7

For Group III these specialized type contracts were distributed as follows:

1. Specific theorists. N = 1
2. Topical areas. N = 13

The exceptionally heavy emphasis on the topic areas in all three groups suggest that mature students who have choice will select to study accordingly in areas which have deep and immediate relevance for their lives.

Kiesler (1978) believes, "we should be training students to play broader roles in the application of Psychology." (p. 637) Riegel, in the same article states, "we have to reeducate and redirect our students to a sense for the significance of issues and towards an understanding of these issues within an historical and social context." (p. 640) Koch believes, "that we must change the notion of a Psychology to Psychological studies...extensive and important sectors of psychological study require modes of inquiry more like humanities than science." (p. 638)

Brewster-Smith adds that "we might take much more seriously the opportunities in continuing education, "life long learning," making common cause with institutions of higher education that share our inertial squeeze and building upon the strong public interest in Psychology." (p. 646)

It is clear that mature motivated students, given choices and the opportunity for individualization will elect studies which reflect:

1. a concern for issues and the social context in which these issues are raised,

2. their desire to use the findings of Psychology in application to the problems of their lives and times,
3. that they believe that psychological studies has broad scope and many dimensions,
4. the attitude that they are developing the skills to become life-long independent learners.

They are, therefore, attempting to realize the hopes and expectations for education in Psychology that eminent members of the profession have expressed.

The challenge for education in Psychology is to develop the tools and methods which make students and faculty, in Sender's (1978) words, "...participant educators...co-creators of our own future." (p. 644) This is not easy given the constraints of university structure and processes, of antagonistic attitudes, of unreadiness and inappropriateness to many student populations.

Yet for students, a respect for their individual interest, for their personal development, for their ability to make choices and their potential as life-long learners should be a goal.

Finally, it may be in psychology's own self-interest to make psychological studies more relevant. It may be the way we can hope to generate advocates for psychology as science and profession. Having been a "psych major" may make some future legislator or setter of social policy more amenable to the causes of psychologists. It is clear that psychology needs advocates (AAP, Nov. 1978). It is the students of today who are the public and officials of tomorrow.

Summary

This study sought to investigate the kinds of content areas that mature students in Psychological studies and Human Development select to pursue, given almost limitless free choice. Three groups of students were identified; the first, some of who expressed an intention to pursue graduate work in Psychology while a larger portion still intended to work full-time after graduation but

thought of themselves as Psychology Majors; a second group (Group II) who identified themselves as Human Development Majors, a few of whom had definite intentions to seek graduate work in Psychology and somewhat more intended to work full-time; and a third group (Group III) who expressed no interest in graduate work in psychology but were interested in psychological type studies and of whom a large proportion were already or expected to work full-time after graduation.

Examination of selected content areas of study revealed that Group I choices were more compatible with what would be provided for a major in Psychology in a traditional college; Group II and III programs reflected more compatibility with program offerings in four-year colleges without the major. The major difference appeared in the following areas:

1. An extreme lack of selection of content areas in the natural science process across all groups.
2. More interest in applied areas amongst Group I students, especially in the area of counseling. A special interest in counseling amongst Group II and III students as well.
3. The most significant difference was the prevalence of choice of studies dealing with: psychology and contemporary social problems, humanistic concerns, application of psychology and special topical areas related to personal and social concerns.
4. Inclusion of other disciplines as part of the Major for Group II and III students.

Note: a) I am indebted to Dr. George Doten, Chairman of the Psychology Department at Trinity College for his kind attention. The insights he provided based on the Trinity experience were invaluable.

References

AAP Advance Assn. for The Advancement of Psychology, Washington, D.C., Nov. 1978.

Brewster-Smith, M. Psychology and the Future, American Psychologist, 1978, 33, 7, 641 - 647.

Dressel, P. The College and University Curriculum, Berkeley: McCutchan Publishing Corp., 1971.

Fooden, M. What Name Shall It Be Called, Unpublished Report, ESC, 1978.

Gould, S. and Cross, P.K. (eds.) Explorations in Non-Traditional Study, San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1972.

Hall, L. and Assoc., New Colleges and New Students, San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1974.

Hefferlin, J. B. L. Dynamics of Academic Reform, San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1969.

Heiss, A. An Inventory of Academic Innovation and Reform, Berkeley: Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973.

Kiesler, C. Psychology and the Future, American Psychologist, 1978, 33, 7, 641 - 647.

Knudson, B. The Role of the Student in Curriculum Planning. In Allen, D., Melnick, M., Peele, C. (eds.) Improving University Teaching Reform, Renewal and Reward, University of Mass. Press, 1975.

Koch, S. Psychology and the Future, American Psychologist, 1978, 33, 7, 641 - 647.

Kulik, J. A., Brown, D. R., Vestewig, R. E., Wright, J. Undergraduate Education in Psychology, Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Assn., 1973.

McKeachie, W. and Milholland, J. Undergraduate Curriculum in Psychology, Fairlawn, NJ, Scott Foresman and Co., 1961.

Riegel, K. F. Psychology and the Future, American Psychologist, 1978, 33, 7, 641 - 647.

Wolfle, D., Buxton, C., Cofer, C., Gustad, J., MacLeod, R., McKeachie, W. Improving Undergraduate Education in Psychology, NY, McMillan Co., 1952.

Zyskind, H. and Sternfeld, R. The Voiceless University, San Francisco: e Jossey Bass, 1971.

TABLE I

ESC students' plans after graduation

	Group I	Group II	Group III
Enter a Graduate program in Psychology	12*	3**	0
Enter an MSW Program	6	3	2
Undecided or non-specific about what kind of graduate work	10	10	5
Specific other graduate program	5	2	4***
Graduate work not stated	15	15	12
TOTAL	48	31	23

*none stated the Ph. D. specifically as objective; most often stated as "a graduate program in Psychology."

**one student stated the Ph. D. as objective.

***one student hopes to enter law school.
one student hopes to enter medical school.

TABLE II

	% of State Colleges Offering Course in 1969 from Kulik(1973)*	Number of Contracts in each area elected by ESC students Group I.N	Group II.N	Group III.N	Total	% of total contracts (511) completed in this area
General Introductory Psychology	100%	7	1	2	10	(1.9%)
Child	49	4	10	4	18	(3.5%)
Social	-	14	3	1	18	(3.5%)
Abnormal	68	16	2	4	22	(4.3%)
Educational	29	2	0	2	4	(.8%)
Test and Measures	66	5	2	1	8	(1.6%)
Adolescent	34	5	1	0	6	(1.2%)
Personality	59	12	4	3	19	(3.5%)
Experimental	55	9	2	0	11	(2.0%)
Applied	16	15	17	5	37	(7.3%)
Mental Hygiene	18	17	4	8	29	(5.7%)
Statistics	37	13	4	0	17	(3.3%)
Research	-	4	2	0	6	(1.2%)
Problems	-	-	-	-	-	-
Physiological	36	2	0	0	2	(.4%)
Learning	49	1	0	0	1	(.2%)
Systems	45	0	0	0	0	-
Adjustment	19	1	1	0	2	(.4%)
Industrial	19	1	1	0	2	(.4%)
Developmental	18	3	3	3	9	(1.7%)
Clinical	16	0	0	1	1	(.2%)
Counseling	10	18	14	19	51	(10.%)
Comparative	23	0	0	0	0	-
Perception	29	1	0	0	1	(.2%)
Advanced Experimental	8	0	0	0	0	-
Advanced General	6	(included in introduction and general)				
Personnel	15	0	0	1	1	(.2%)
History	8	1	6	0	1	(.2%)
Motivation	23	0	0	0	0	-
Individual Differences	18	1	2	0	3	(.6%)
		153	73	54	280	

*Kulik did not specify the coding for course titles. There appeared to be a general compatibility; however, some titles such as problems, mental hygiene and the like are less clear.

TABLE II A

Rank order of ten most frequent Psychology contracts of ESC students.

1	Counseling	51
2	Applied	37
3	Mental Hygiene	29
4	Abnormal	22
5	Personality	19
6	Child	18
7	Social	18
8	Statistics	17
9	Research	11
10	General	10

TABLE III

Number of contracts completed by ESC students according categories (based on Kulik, 1973).

	I	II	III
General (and Intro) Psych.	7	1	2
Statistics/Research Design	13/13	4/4	0/0
Natural Science Processes			
Learning	1	0	0
Sensation and Perception	1	0	0
Cognition and Thinking	1	0	0
Comparative	0	0	0
Physiological	2	0	0
Language and Verbal Behavior	1	0	0
Motivation & Emotion	0	0	0
Mathematical	0	0	0
	6	0	0
Social Science			
a. Personality	12	4	3
Social	14	3	1
Development, Child Adolescent	12	14	7
Individual Differences	1	2	0
Abnormal and Clinical	16	2	5
Psychology and Current Social Problems	17	4	8
b.*Seminar Topical Subject Areas	58	32	14
*Psych. of Women	3	2	0
*Community Psychology	2	0	0
*Humanistic Psychology	3	1	0
	138	64	38
Review			
History and Systems	1	0	0
Advanced Review	1	0	0
	2	0	0
Applied			
Test and Measurements	5	2	1
Counseling and Guidance	18	14	19
Educational Psychology	2	0	2
Industrial	1	1	1
Vocational	-	-	-
Adjustment (Group Dynamics Personal Development)	10	4	6
Skills	15	17	5
	51	38	34

TABLE III (continued)

Independent Study (Independent Projects)	3	2	0	
Interdisciplinary Studies	7	7	2	
General Content Areas (Undetermined or massed studies in psychology)	10	3	4	
**Studies in other than Psychology	0	21	37	
TOTAL	250	144	117	511

*Studies not listed by Kulik, but would clearly be included in Social Science Group.

**Includes Social Sciences, Humanities, Education and Social Services but listed in concentration (not included in Kulik).

TABLE IV

A comparison of % of curriculum in courses in various categories offered in 4-year schools with and without major with % contracts in each group completed by ESC students.

	4-yr. school w/major	4-yr. school w/o major	ESC Group I	ESC Group II	ESC Group III
General/Intro. Psycho.	5.52	13.40	2.8%	.69%	1.7%
Stat./Res.	10.65	5.15	5.2/5.2 (10.4)	2.77/2.77 (5.54)	0
Natural Science	19.07	4.11	2.4	0	0
Social Science	31.62	36.07	(a) 29.0 (b) 26.5 55.5	(a) 20.2 (b) 24.3 44.5	(a) 20.5 (b) 11.9 32.4
Review	6.97	2.57	.8	0	0
Applied	15.44	29.87	20	25.7	24.4
Independent Projects	8.16	4.63	1.2	1.4	0
Interdisciplinary Studies	.95	1.03	2.8	4.9	1.7
Several Content Area	1.64	3.09	4.0	2.08	3.4
*Other disciplines (social sciences, humanities, education and social services.)	-	-	0	14.6	31.6

*This doesn't mean to indicate that Psychology (Group I) students to not study in many other disciplines, but only that they are not part of the major concentration as when students are in a departmental major where in Groups II and III they are considered to be so.

(a) includes the social science courses included in Kulik's listing.

(b) includes the seminar topical subject areas plus Psychology of Women, Community Psychology and Humanistic Psychology.